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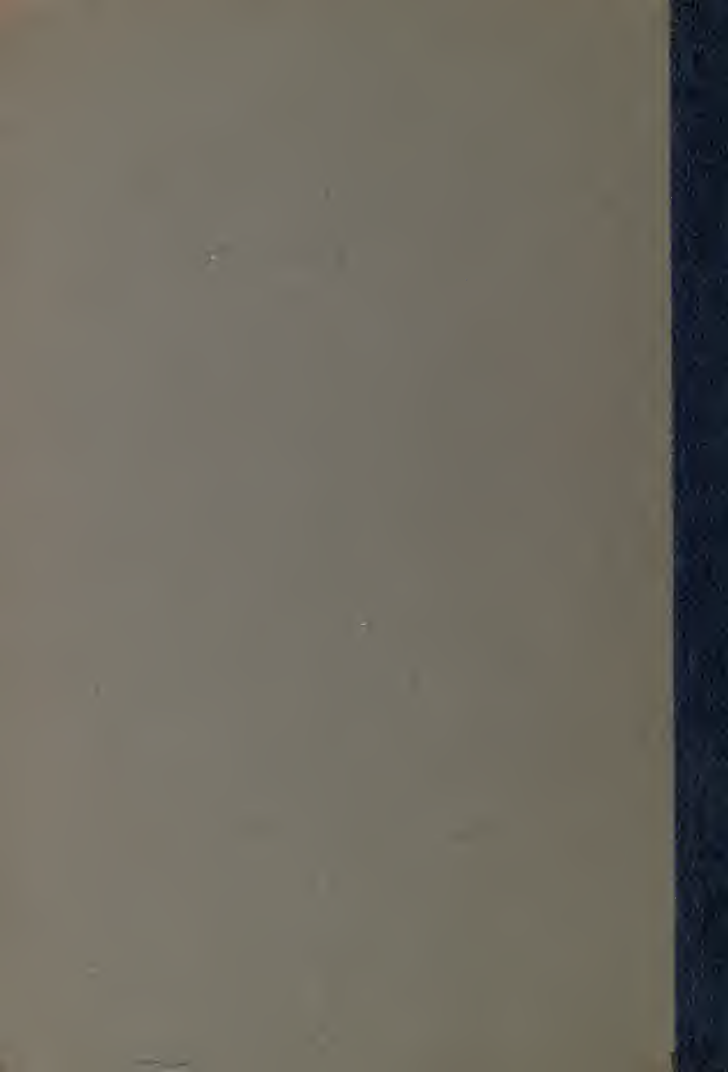


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[Bayly, Mary]
The Christian aspect
of the temperance question

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Arthur C. Benson
London

THE

CHRISTIAN ASPECT

OF THE

TEMPERANCE QUESTION.

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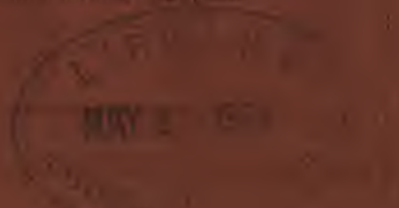
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BY THE AUTHOR OF

"HIGHER HOMES AND HOW TO REACH THEM"

"BETTER BRICKS" ETC., ETC.



LONDON:

S. W. PARTRIDGE & PAPERDOSTER ROW.

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THE
CHRISTIAN ASPECT
OF THE
TEMPERANCE QUESTION.

BY THE AUTHOR OF
"RAGGED HOMES AND HOW TO MEND THEM,"
"MENDED HOMES," ETC., ETC.

LONDON:
S. W. PARTRIDGE, 9, PATERNOSTER ROW.

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PREFACE.

THE following deeply-interesting letter from my dear friend, Mrs. Bayly, was evidently intended to lead to some practical result; but it appeared to me that I could not do much to carry out the views she presents until they were made extensively known among those who would be likely to sympathize with them.

I, therefore, concluded it would be best to publish the letter addressed to me, and also one which recently appeared in the "WEEKLY RECORD," bearing on the same subject. Having obtained Mrs. Bayly's consent, I now send them forth, most earnestly commending them to the serious and prayerful consideration of the Christian public.

Either Mrs. Bayly or I shall be glad to receive communications from those who may be willing

to respond to her appeal, or who may have any practical suggestion to offer as to the best mode of accomplishing the objects she has suggested.

I have, myself, laboured in the cause of Total Abstinence for more than a quarter of a century, in the hope that the time would come when this great question would receive not only the sanction but the hearty co-operation of Christians in every section of the Church.

It will be a blessed thing for our country and for the Church when this hope is realized; and I know of nothing more likely to hasten its realization than the publication of such sensible and Christian views, and such thoroughly practical experience, as are contained in the following letters.

SAMUEL BOWLY.

Horsepools, near Stroud,
March, 1862.

8, Lansdowne Crescent,
March, 1862.

MY DEAR MR. BOWLY,

WHEN I think of the number of years you have stood forth as the great champion of the Temperance cause, and of all the self-denying efforts you have made, and are still making, to rid poor suffering humanity of its greatest and bitterest curse, I feel that to no one so well as yourself can I address the few observations I am about to make.

I need hardly say there is nothing like earnest working in any cause for finding out both its strength and its weakness. In common with other people, I have long known that Intemperance is the cause of most of our crime, pauperism, disease, and insanity; and can scarcely remember the time when it did not occupy my gravest attention; but within the last few years I have (in connection with my dear husband and a few other Christian friends) been engaged in a more direct conflict with this deadly foe to God.

and man. We have used such weapons as came most readily to hand, and have been tried by others, and we have no reason to complain of want of success. Many hundreds of men and women have been reclaimed, ragged homes have been turned into thrifty ones, neglected children cared for and educated, public-houses emptied, and places of worship filled. You will think it strange, perhaps, that with all this success I am taking my pen to write something which may appear like lodging a complaint against Temperance Societies generally, both as to the way in which they are conducted, and the cause advocated. I would not be understood to speak disparagingly of any well-intentioned effort; the feeblest worker in this cause must stand higher in our estimation than one who will leave untouched such an unprecedented mass of sin and suffering; but still, when listening to the speeches of many of our Temperance advocates, and observing the way in which Societies are often conducted, the conviction has fastened upon my mind that the strength of the foe attacked, has been grievously underrated.

The two great rallying points for the Temperance forces may be said to be the Alliance, and the London Temperance League. The first

is directing its efforts towards the Legislature, hoping in this way that something may be done to suppress the traffic in strong drinks. The League is trusting rather to moral measures, to persuasion, to representation, to general enlightenment. To both these parties we are greatly indebted for the vast amount of information they have disseminated. By their lectures, and their cheap publications, they have sent forth into this country such a flood of light, and have so satisfactorily proved to every thinking mind the depth and extent of this our national vice, that no one can now plead excuse for ignorance, or can justify themselves in saying that no special effort is needed. It is in fact very much to be attributed to the wise and well-directed exertions of these two influential bodies that many of the more thinking and Christian part of the community are now joining our ranks, and bringing the force of their intelligence and Christianity to bear upon the great question of how the drunkard is to be reclaimed.

From being frequently associated with this class of persons, and from earnest conversations I have had with them, I think I may venture in a short summary to give the conclusions at which many have arrived. "Knowing the necessity of under-

standing the nature and power of any foe we desire to attack and to overcome, we have been at considerable pains to fathom the depths of that flood of Intemperance which has long spread, and is still spreading, desolation and woe over the face of our country. We have made ourselves acquainted with its traffic, we have discovered that not as a mere threat were the words spoken, 'Woe unto him through whom the offence cometh,' for so truly wretched is the fate of the majority of those unhappy men who from the love of gain are induced to become keepers of public-houses, that it would literally be better for many of them that 'a mill-stone were hanged about their neck and they cast into the sea.' "

"These houses prove to be working men's greatest hindrance—a very large proportion of the wages earned in this country find their way into them ; consequently thousands of the children of the poor are consigned to early graves, or, to what is far worse, a struggling and diseased existence. The children of the drunkard fill our hospitals, our reformatories, our lunatic asylums, and the country is every year put to an enormous expense to pay for the punishment of crime committed under the influence of drink. But, more than this—we have discovered what intemperance does for

our churches. We find it there the Goliath of our day, stalking forward to defy the armies of the living God. Its victims are taken from the pulpit, the reading-desk, the communion-table, the Sunday-school ; indeed, no position is too sacred for its entrance. We go over all this again and again, and we say to ourselves, What manner of foe is this we are presuming to encounter ? We are not unacquainted with other forms of sin, but we know of nothing to match this ; the strength, the vigilance, the endurance of this foe is enough to daunt even the spirit and faith of a David. We have also long habit, appetite, companionship, all against the relinquishing of the intoxicating cup. But this is not all : we find, in bringing our forces to bear upon this point, we are attacking the strongholds of our foe, the part he guards with the most jealous suspicion ; this masterpiece of his cruelty cannot be interfered with, without rousing the arch-enemy to the utmost. Hosts upon hosts of invisible agents ever at his command are despatched, charged at any price to rout the assailants. Ah ! yes, we know it. The apostle says, ‘ We wrestle not against flesh and blood ; ’ but we do, and *also*, ‘ against principalities, against powers against the rulers of the darkness of this world.’

With the full consciousness of all this, who will wonder that, with anxious faces, we should look at one another, and say : " Who is sufficient for these things ? " We examine the weapons which have been so often used—the signing of the pledge, the lecture upon profit and loss, the distribution of Temperance tracts ; and though we dare not condemn what God has often honoured, we feel that with these weapons *alone* we shall be no match for our deadly antagonist. The sword of Gideon cannot be dispensed with in this conflict, but only as it is connected with the sword of the Lord will the city fall before it. The weapons of our warfare must be " mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds. " " The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light. " We do not hear of the general of an army sending his feeblest troops into the thickest of the fight, but hitherto in the conduct of our moral warfare, we have too often left these especial " strongholds " to be " stormed " more by the weakness of " fleshly wisdom, " than by the strength of the " sword of the Spirit. "

We trust we may not be misunderstood, and that it may not be supposed for a moment we are joining in the senseless cry of " putting Tem-

perance in the place of the Gospel." Besides the patent fact that Teetotalism is the putting away of something, and therefore can never take the place of anything, we have never in our experience found any Gospel in the drunkard to displace. If not as advice, but with all the authority of "a Teacher sent from on high," Jesus could pronounce of such unmistakably important and valuable things as hands, feet, and eyes, "if they offend thee," or, as it might be rendered, "cause thee to sin," "cut them off and cast them from thee," what are we to infer would have been His verdict as to the course to be pursued towards the unnecessary (at least) and generally injurious use of intoxicating drinks? It is because we love the Gospel, and know that the deep fever of man's stricken nature will never be cured by anything else, that we love the cause which makes way for its entrance: in the words of a gifted writer, "Teetotalism is not the light of Heaven, but it is often the unsealing of the eyes. It is not the Word of Life, but it has unstopped a thousand ears to hearken to it. It is not Christianity, nor even its associate, but it is often its forerunner." Like the illustrious herald of the Messiah, who confessed and denied not, but confessed, saying, "I am not

the Christ," it is ready, in its proudest achievements, and amid its loftiest claims, to say from the lips of all its Christian disciples, "There cometh one after me mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose."

"Our idea of Teetotalism is, that, standing alone, it much resembles what John the Baptist's mission would have been without the 'One that cometh after me.' Many seem to have been roused by his preaching to a sense of duty and a fear of the consequences of sin. Christ himself testifies 'the publicans and harlots believed him,' but even these powerful impressions might have died out with the preacher's voice, had no 'bearer of iniquity,' followed. The preaching of John the Baptist was God's chosen preparation for the Gospel of Christ; the first link of a chain which, the sinner following, led him, link by link, to the cross of Christ, where the burden, of which the eloquent voice of the preacher had made him conscious, fell off.

"We believe that never since those early days was there such a time as the present for a people prepared for the Lord. The voices of those who, standing upon our platforms, have been crying to this generation of drunkards to flee from the

wrath to come, have done much to produce this long-desired result. The great thing now to be earnestly sought for is, that the ground thus reclaimed from the desolate waste, may, without delay, pass into the hands of the cultivator, and be sown thickly with the seeds of eternal life. May God, in His great mercy, arouse every Christian-hearted man and woman to see that they have now a work to do for the Master. If they will come forward armed with the sword of the Spirit, Intemperance will be vanquished—this stronghold of the god of this world will have to surrender; but if the cry is not heard to ‘come to the help of the Lord against the mighty,’ the enemy we fear may return, and the last state may be worse than the first.”

In writing thus to you, dear friend, I have been expressing the thoughts of many dear servants of Jesus with whom it is my privilege to work. You know how greatly God is blessing us here—many hundreds of drunkards have been reclaimed: the strong man armed has sometimes returned and taken possession, but in many, many cases it is Jesus himself who has filled the emptied house.

Last Sunday it was given out by our good

friend Mr. Varley that he should be at the school-room in the Potteries on Wednesday evening, and would be glad to see there any who now, having long been hearers of the Word, wished to declare themselves on the Lord's side. I went down in the course of the evening, and found about eighty assembled. I never heard anything that touched me more than the simply-related experience of these people. Every word told that it was Jesus they had found, and "He had made them glad." One man (a navvy) said, "I am so happy all day at my work, the laughing at don't hurt me ; my heart is so full of Jesus, I can't even feel it, and when I'm going home and think of the happy time I shall have along with Him, I can't help singing so loud as I go along, that people looks at me as if they thought me mad." Another man (a coachman) said, "It used to be a weary time waiting outside the theatre for the ladies at night, but now I spend it in telling the people of Jesus, and it don't seem no time. Many and many a man has stopped from going to the public-house to listen. I get a lot of footmen round me sometimes, and I takes a text and speaks to them about Jesus, and often and often a hand is stretched up from the crowd to shake hands with me on the coach-box and to

tell me they have heard the best news they ever heard in their lives, and when I puts up at the stable, I tells the same good news to the stable-boys and horse-keepers, and they listen to me, and as many as thirty of us will get together in the stables or hay-lofts for prayer." I could fill several sheets in recounting the touching and beautiful expressions of love to Jesus and trust in Jesus I heard that night, and when I remembered that only two years previously (before any helping hand had been stretched out to lift these poor people from the pit of drunkenness into which most of them had fallen, and to bring them within the sound of the glorious Gospel which had made them free indeed) they were far off by wicked works, hateful and hating one another, I felt that God had indeed set His own seal to the way in which we had been working; that we had been made "strong in the Lord and in the power of His might."

Those who advocate war often tell us that the self-sacrifice which it entails, and the concentration of every power for the time upon one object, ennobles the character and redeems it from its native littleness and selfishness. Alas! that we should wait and need the presence of a foreign enemy to call forth these exalted qualities. By

the side of our doors, often within them, there lurks a foe which is doing more to destroy our property, our country, and to ruin bodies and souls, than any invasion which history records. In earnest combat with this foe, the noblest qualities of our nature are called forth; the principles of self-sacrifice here required, the concentration to a great object, in connection with taking to ourselves the whole armour of God, will call out a type of character more elevated than the world has often seen. It is this especial work which God is now requiring of us.

I need hardly say that there are many working in the cause of Temperance who do not yet view it entirely in the light in which I have now presented it, and one great obstacle to their doing so is, I think, that there is no organ existing among us, for what we may call, the setting forth of these principles. The earnestly religious Temperance party have not, that I know of, any publication which may be said to represent them. We have, as I have said, the political side in the Alliance, and the politic and moral side in the League, and it has occurred to me and to others also, that some concentration and representation is needed for that party whose especial object in working to take up the stum-

bling stone of intemperance out of the way, is, that Christ himself may enter and take possession. 4

Within the last few years many clergymen and other excellent Christian persons have joined this movement, and it appears to me that the time is now come for the introduction of some kind of centralization which might greatly strengthen our cause by enabling us to act with more unity of design. Whether it would be desirable to introduce some well-conducted periodical, or to endeavour to improve such Temperance publications as already exist, I leave to the consideration of those far better qualified to judge than I can be.

It may seem a matter of small importance compared with weightier things ; but I will just mention here that I believe our cause has suffered some degree of reproach, which it might have been spared if it had received from the commencement a more dignified appellation. The often-ridiculed and most-unmeaning word "Teetotalism," should now give way to the entirely-expressive and perfectly-adapted term introduced by Professor Miller, "Nephalism." Any newly-formed Society or publication ranging itself under this title would

soon cause it to be both understood and appreciated.

If it should appear to you and to others that some such steps should be taken, I would suggest the propriety of a meeting being called together in London during the summer, to take this subject into earnest consideration.

Believe me,

My dear friend,

Yours very truly,

MARY BAYLY.

P.S. Since finishing this letter I have read a little book called "Christian Witness-bearing against the Sin of Intemperance," by the Rev. Horatius Bonar; his concluding observations will show how entirely he agrees with us in the views he takes of the Christian aspect of this great question.

"And now, Christian brethren, we ask, Do you find anything unscriptural in our movement? If you are not prepared to condemn us, will you not join us? The more numerous that we are strengthened by the co-operation of sound Christian friends, the more certain we are of having these principles carried out. Your joining

us will help to keep up the tone of the movement, and prevent it from sinking into a mere philanthropical device for white-washing men so as to make them whitened sepulchres, while inwardly they are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. Our desire is, that this should be a Christian movement, not merely for bettering men's bodies and ameliorating their outward condition, but for saving their souls and acting upon their eternal state.

"We are lifting up a testimony; and we are desirous that it should be truly a Christian testimony. Anything less than this would fall short of our real aim. Our testimony is against an enormous evil. We would fain unite the Christians of the land in one strong, bold, energetic protest, both against the evil itself, and against everything that would foster the evil. We want it to be such a protest as shall lay the axe to the very root of the tree. The conspiracy of evil is wide-spread and mighty. It is a conspiracy of the Evil one to drown men's souls in perdition. It numbers its millions, and they are firmly banded together to countenance each other in sin, and to enlist others under this flag of hell.

"Against this conspiracy of Satan we are

forming a confederacy of Christian men, that we may meet the banded evil effectively, and by God's help break up this horrid league of darkness. Is it too much to ask all who love the Lord Jesus, and yearn over the souls of perishing men, to unite with us? We may be blest in plucking brands from the burning; and oh! is it not worth our while to try?"

APPENDIX.

THE MENDED HOMES AT NOTTING-
HILL.

WE have great pleasure in giving Mrs. Bayly's graphic account of the interesting Mission over which she presides with so much success :—

MY DEAR SIR,—You have always taken so kindly an interest in my little book, "Mended Homes," that it is possible you may remember that in page fifty-four I have stated that "in the work of improving the homes of the poor, at least six times as much can be accomplished by working in connection with the plans of the Temperance Society as without them." More than six months have elapsed since this statement was sent forth to the world, and while some have cavilled at it, and others have kindly expostulated with me on "using strong language," the work itself has been steadily progressing. It has occurred to me that I can best defend the position I have taken by asking you to make room in your paper for a few facts.

On a small table, standing in the library of the

Workmen's-hall, three worn and rather shabby-looking books may be seen, bearing the title of Temperance Pledge-books, Vol. I., Vol. II., Vol. III. They would scarcely sell for anything, even as waste-paper, and a stranger would indeed wonder to see the deep emotion manifest on the countenance of some who may be turning over the leaves of these books. A succession of such names as "John Smith," and "Thomas Brown," would certainly be read by the stranger without creating any interest ; but to those who for years past have had to mourn over these names, as connected with everything degrading to the owner, and mischievous to others, and who also know that in many cases from the time of the date of that register a new career has commenced ; to such, these worn and blotted books possess a charm which no volumes from the British Museum, rare and choice though they may be, would have the power to convey.

The date of the first name in Vol. I. is January 26th, 1860. The date of the last is January 3rd, 1862, making 905 in about two years. From the migratory habits of the working-classes, and many other causes, it is impossible to make any accurate statement of the numbers who have been faithful to their pledge. We have good reasons for believing it must be something between 500 and 600. But supposing we put the number down as low as 400, and say that each of these must have saved from intoxicating drink a sum certainly not less than 5s. per

week—this, without reckoning anything for time saved, and property not destroyed, would amount to £100 per week, making £5200 in the year. The money thus saved goes straight back into the houses of the poor, and from them again into labour-making trades—the ironmongers, the cabinetmakers, linen and woollen-drapers, whose capital is expended so much more upon labour than upon material; these all come in for a share of the money saved from the public-house.

I went down into the library one Tuesday evening and found a man signing the pledge. He said he had got rid of 30s. since Saturday evening; that earn what he might, he never had anything to help himself with after the middle of the week, and he thought it was time to try a fresh plan. There were several men in the room, and after the new member had withdrawn, I asked them if it were their opinion that I should be perfectly within the limits of truth if I stated that, taking one member with another, at least 5s. each per week was saved through giving up the drink. The men expressed astonishment at my naming so low a figure; one man said that, for years, he had earned from £3 to £4 per week, and never had any of it left at the end of the week. Another told me that, though his wages used to be about £2 per week, he for years together had not taken any part of it home to his family, they entirely depended upon the exertions of the mother. A tailor said he used to earn £3 a-week,

and often had not a fourpenny-piece left by Monday morning. It must be remembered that all these large earnings went for the benefit of a trade which, in the production of its article, expends scarcely more than 1s. 6d. in the pound upon labour ; and, as I told these men, the public-house robs them not only of what they are actually earning now, but diminishes the prospect of future earnings. The playing fountain must be so arranged that after the gracefully-springing drops have fulfilled their mission of beauty, they must return again to their old resting-place for future use. So must it be with labour. If the wages earned by the working-classes found their way back again into labour-making trades, instead of the greater part of it being expended upon what makes the smallest possible amount of labour, we should not, as now, be so constantly distressed with the oft-repeated complaint, "out of work." The result of our talk that evening was that the men assured me that I should be much nearer the truth if I put down 10s. per week saved by each instead of 5s. This would bring the actual money rescued by only one Temperance Society, in one year, to £10,400.

When we consider the enormous trouble, annoyance, and mortification of having to collect money for benevolent purposes, and when collected, the difficulty of dispensing it wisely and well, so as to ensure its not being expended (indirectly at least) upon gin and beer, it is surely worthy of consideration

whether the plans adopted by the Temperance Society may not after all be the best and safest for supplying the wants of the poor. My own experience this winter, as well as of several dear friends who are working with me, is, that we have not now anything like half the applications for relief we used to have.

If material progress were the only thing gained by the adoption of the principles and practice of total abstinence, it would be still worth much, for the prosperity obtained out of "self-help" has about it a conservative element which no patronage can ever confer. But while we heartily rejoice with our poor neighbours upon the upward and onward steps they have taken in the social scale, we are happy to be able to record that the moral and religious triumphs have been in advance of outward improvement.

Dr. Arnold used to say, that when he wished to find out the moral status of a boy he did it by observing him not so much in the school-room as in the play-ground.

For some time we have been looking forward with alternate hope and fear to the Christmas week, feeling quite sure that the quality of our work would then be tested, and if it stood upon a rotten foundation it would topple to the ground.

For many long years the week which should call forth so much love and gratitude from this poor world to "Him who spared not His own Son" has

been passed by the majority of our poor neighbours in scenes of riot and drunkenness. With the exception of a few days at Whitsuntide, the Christmas week was the only time when I could not venture into the Potteries.

At the Sunday evening prayer-meeting before Christmas Day special prayer was offered that God, in His great mercy, would enable all to abide by their resolutions, and as much as possible keep away from temptation. Knowing that the day after Christmas Day, called Boxing Day, would present the greatest difficulties, the governor of the hall and our committee of working men wisely arranged that dinner and tea should be provided in the lecture-room. Single tickets were issued at 2s. 6d. each, and double tickets for a man and his wife, at 4s. 6d. The room was tastefully decorated—even a few winter flowers were found for the table. About thirty came to the dinner, and many more to tea.

When Captain Bayly went down for half an hour in the evening he found about one hundred and thirty assembled, the company sitting in double rows round the room, a space being left in the middle, as needed for various games. A goodly company occupied the platform; one of the committee (a gardener) was in the chair, supported on his right by an old gipsy, upwards of ninety years of age, who had been voted into this place of honour, in consideration of his being the oldest man in the society. Apples, oranges, and nuts appeared to be in abun-

dance ; and though unaided by artificial appliances, no one seemed at a loss how to crack nuts, or jokes either ; some told diverting stories, others sang songs. Our indefatigable friend, Mr. Varley, amused the company by recitations. Every one seemed easy and cheerful. We were told the party broke up at half-past ten o'clock, feeling strengthened by their evening's amusement instead of weakened.

I seldom went to the hall that week without finding it occupied by a goodly company—seventy, eighty, and even one hundred have been there at one time. I never before felt so much its exceeding value as a shelter from temptation.

The inspector of police remarked to a friend of mine, he did not know what had come to the place—that formerly at this season of the year they used to find drunken people literally lying in heaps, and there they were obliged to let them lie, for as to taking them off to the station-house, they would require a house five times as big to take them all in. “As to the Potteries,” said another policeman, “our work is over there ; we have nothing now to do with these people ; and if we are to go on like this, and the public-houses are to be put down, we must be put down too, for there will be scarcely anything left for us to do.” Every Saturday evening I receive a journal from our Bible woman. You will readily believe I looked forward to it last week with more interest than common. I will copy it for

you:—"Dec. 28,—I think to-night that I can say what will be most pleasing ; I feel it is to my own mind—and that is, that this holiday has passed quietly away. I have felt what a great change has taken place during the year that has passed away—how many happy homes there are now, and cheerful firesides. One poor woman has just told me what a cheerful Christmas she has had ; she has kept sober all the time, and she says how much better it was. During the week I only saw two the worse for drink ; one man was being led home by his wife ; she had been drinking, but she was not so bad as him. She said to me as I passed, they had only been spending what they had worked hard for. I could only pray that they, too, by God's grace, may be led to see the fearful state they are living in, and be led to give it up and try better things.—Signed, E. ARTHUR."

To meet the expressed wishes of many it was arranged that a "watch service" should be held at the school-room in the Potteries on the last evening in the year. At eleven o'clock Captain Bayly and I went down. We passed some public-houses on our way, and from their perfect quietness we were led to suppose that they had scarcely a single customer. We found upwards of 100 assembled at the chapel. Some of our good mothers were there. One or two had wrapped the baby warmly in a shawl, that it might sleep safely and peacefully while the dear mother enjoyed the service. A few older children

slept in the arms of their fathers. I noticed several there, joining reverently in the prayers and praises, who, two years ago, had been without hope and without God in the world, only known as abject, miserable drunkards. But the most affecting sight to me was, the presence of a few women, who, for years past, may be said to have been the terror of the place. I am sure I have often shuddered as I passed them. An old inhabitant of the Potteries said to our Temperance missionary when she began her work, about six months ago, "If you can get Mrs. T. over on your side, you may reckon you have got the place ; but the devil won't let her go : she's about the best servant he has got." But Mrs. T. was there that night, neat and clean in her appearance, and the expression in her broad face manifesting the deepest attention.

As the old year merged into the new, for a few minutes there was perfect silence. Then all rose and sang as with one voice the well-known hymn, "There is a fountain filled with blood." It is impossible to describe the feeling depicted on many faces there as the words were repeated :—

" The dying thief rejoiced to see
That fountain in his day,
And there may I, though vile as he,
Wash all my guilt away."

Then followed words of earnest prayer—thankfulness for the past, hope for the future, victory for

those hard pressed in the battle with sin, blessings for those ready to perish, strength for all for the conflicts of another year, the continued presence of Him who has promised "Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world." Then "Praise God from whom all blessings flow," and the words of the benediction reverently pronounced, closed the whole.

I did not raise my head so quickly as some ; but when I did several of our dear mothers were surrounding me, all anxious to have the first shake of the hand in the New Year. Kind, loving words came pouring in on every side. "May this be the blesseddest year you ever had in your life," said one.

"It can't be a blessedder year than the last," said another. A new voice chimed in with "Oh, yes, it can, because we are all going to work at the good together this year."

"Ah ! but still the last year must always be the best to me, for I found Jesus then, and now I know how to be happy."

Then some men were standing near the door, waiting to have their say. After the usual congratulation, one said, "The first thing I did this year was to thank God for making me a sober man, and now the next thing I want is to thank you and the Captain."

The clock struck one before we reached home, but the body did not grudge to the mind the hours

usually devoted to its rest; we were refreshed, strengthened, happy.

We have never doubted or wondered either, that there should be joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.

We always meet the members of our committee on the first Wednesday in the month, and this year it happened to come on New Year's Day. Twenty members were present out of twenty-two. There was so much work to be planned and arranged for during the ensuing year, that it was a quarter to eleven before we separated.

We have had a District Visiting Society at work for some time past, to which we are greatly indebted for much of our success. The neighbourhood is divided into districts. Each district is in the hands of one or two committee men. The secretary of the District Visiting Society examines the pledge book once every week, and copies the names and addresses of all who may have recently signed the pledge upon pieces of paper, and sends them to those visitors upon whose district the new members are resident. On the following Sunday the District Visitor calls, invites the new friend to join the Hall, attend the meetings, and if he should happen to prove particularly suited for some kind of work he is soon brought more prominently forward. These visitors are supplied with tracts, both Temperance and religious. These tracts are enclosed in "Workmen's Hall Temperance Society" covers, on

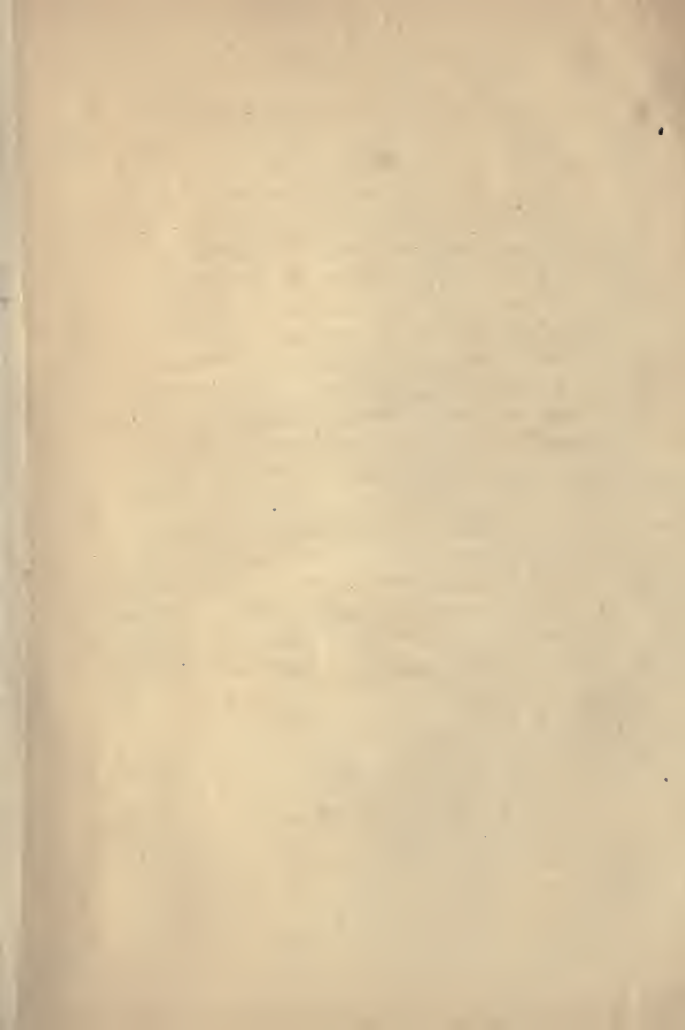
the outside of which is printed the terms and advantages of attendance at the Hall, the time of all meetings, &c. I will enclose you a cover, as in itself it contains a considerable amount of information.

You will be glad to hear that attendance at places of worship has much increased during the past year. As many as sixty or seventy of our men are often seen together at one chapel—men who for many long years were utter strangers to everything of the kind. We are far too deeply engaged in real work to have either time or thought to bestow upon the comparative value of different sects, and our people at once feel themselves at liberty to identify themselves with whatever form of worship may be most suited to their capacities, tastes, or inclinations. We are only thankful and happy to know that *all* the churches and chapels in the neighbourhood have received some accession to their numbers since the establishment of our Temperance Society.

I must beg you to excuse the length of this letter. I had no intention of writing so much when I began, but the interest of my subject has carried me on.—Believe me, my dear Sir, yours very truly,

M. BAYLY.

P.S. We shall be glad to continue to receive subscriptions towards the support of female Temperance Missionaries. We know of no agency at the present time so deeply needed, or which is accomplishing so much good.



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